

City of Seattle Parks and Recreation Annual Report 2002



2002 Annual Report

Letter from the Mayor

Dear Friends,

Seattle's parks, community centers, pools, ballfields, boating centers, and environmental learning centers are the hearts of our neighborhoods.

In 2002, not only did we make tremendous progress on the 1999 Community Center Levy, making substantial progress on five projects, we also made great strides on the 2000 Pro Parks Levy, finishing 12 projects and moving forward on more than 50 more.

Among my top priorities is healthy communities all over Seattle. Clean, well-maintained parks and bustling community centers tell the story of healthy communities. To that end we've held volunteer "work parties" at parks all over town under the umbrella of the "Clean Seattle Initiative," where we spiff up parks and surrounding neighborhoods to make them clean and inviting.

Community involvement is key. A recent report by The Trust for Public Land gave the City high marks: "The combination of planning and participation helps make the Seattle [Parks] system one of the country's best."

I hope you'll join us as we work hard to keep our parks clean, our community centers lively, and our kids occupied with safe, fun activities. Together we can make a difference in people's lives.



Greg Nickels
Mayor of Seattle

**For more information, please visit our web site:
www.seattle.gov/parks or call 206-684-4075.**

Letter from the Superintendent

Dear Citizens,

In 2002, the dominant media headline about City government was grim: budget shortfall prompts cutbacks in services. But the news, the real news of Seattle Parks and Recreation was positive and worthy of note: we achieved our basic mission to maintain parks, care for the environment, provide quality recreation experiences for citizens of all ages, and build community.

In response to lower revenues than expected, due to a downturn in the regional economy, we condensed administrative functions, cut some staff, and trimmed at the edges, reducing morning and weekend hours at community centers. The changes in administration gave us a leaner management structure—collapsing four divisions into two—and increased efficiency, improved communication, and streamlined decision-making.

Through all these changes, we were fortunate to have the support of the voter-approved Pro Parks Levy and Community Center Levy, and the continuation of the Neighborhood Matching Fund. Pro Parks, for example, funded increased hours at summer wading pools, added maintenance crews at parks and community centers during busy summer evenings and weekends, and expanded environmental education offerings. We also made substantial progress on projects to improve or build new community centers, develop Sand Point Magnuson Park, acquire new open spaces, and make dozens of improvements in neighborhood parks.

Among the other highlights of the year was the Woodland Park Zoo's shift of operation and management from the City to the non-profit Woodland Park Zoological Society. Under the 20-year agreement, the City retains ownership of the Zoo and will continue to provide significant public funding. The Zoo took a major step forward with the hiring of a new director, Deborah Jensen, last spring. With an exciting new exhibit and savvy marketing, the Seattle Aquarium achieved near record attendance levels.

As you will see in this report, 2002 was an eventful and productive year that kept Parks staff as busy as ever. My thanks to our many partners—among them our Advisory Councils, the Seattle Parks Foundation, Seattle Aquarium Society and the Woodland Park Zoo Society—and to the thousands of other volunteers who have helped make Seattle Parks and Recreation one of the finest park systems in the world. We couldn't do it without you!



Ken Bounds
Superintendent

MAJOR PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

Seattle Parks and Recreation's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) responds to development and facility maintenance needs in parks and recreation facilities throughout the city. In 2002, the Parks CIP included 73 projects for a total of \$53 million.

2000 Pro Parks Levy

Seattle Parks and Recreation staff continued vigorous implementation of the \$198 million Pro Parks Levy, approved by Seattle voters in 2000. For up-to-date information on Pro Parks programs and projects, please visit our web site www.seattle.gov/parks and click on Pro Parks Levy.



**New play
area at
Westcrest
Park**

Acquisitions

- **Homer Harris Park.** Acquired two parcels for a park at 24th Ave. and E Howell St. with Pro Parks funds and \$1.3 million from an anonymous donor (through the Seattle Parks Foundation).
- **Northgate Park.** Acquired 1.7 acres for a new park at NE 105th St. and 5th Ave. NE, part of a larger project that will include the park, a new community center, and a new library.
- Other purchases included 3 acres in **Delridge** and nearly 3 acres along **Thornton Creek**.

Pro Parks Development Projects

In 2002, more than 50 park projects were under way or completed. Planning and design work got under way on improvement plans for South Lake Union Park, Bergen Place, Cheasty Boulevard, Jefferson Park, and Oxbow Park – the future site of a new park in Georgetown. Many projects are under construction including Bradner Gardens Shelterhouse, Schmitz Park, Judkins Playfield, field lighting at Genesee Park, and the new Greenwood Park.

Among the 2002 projects completed:

- **Ward Springs:** new neighborhood park on the south slope of Queen Anne Hill.
- **Wallingford Playfield:** new play area and improvements to paths and park entries.
- **Westcrest Park:** expansion of off-leash area and improvement of play area.
- **Jefferson Park:** completion of a site plan and start of work on path around the nine-hole golf course.

Enhanced Maintenance

Staff provided maintenance for 60 parks and 72 comfort stations during busy evening and weekend hours from mid-May through mid-October. Approximately 30 more tons of litter were collected in 2002 than the previous year. Other Pro Parks-funded staff increased maintenance of park landscapes and athletic field turf.

Recreational & Environmental Programming

With the help of Pro Parks funding, we reached our goal of offering 480 hours of youth and teen activities and programs per week. All community centers formed teen councils to work with staff and advisory councils on teen programs and issues. And nearly 1,000 children participated in the "Learn to Swim" program that offers third and fourth graders vouchers for free swim lessons. Also in 2002, senior adult programming increased significantly.

Pro Parks-funded staff brought environmental programming to classrooms and day camps. More than 1,800 students and 6,000 day campers participated. Programs included decorating Earth Day grocery bags and a reading project with Seattle Public Library. With the help of Pro Parks, we also beefed up our Urban Forestry Program, hiring a forestry crew chief, a third tree crew, and a natural area crew to help maintain green spaces.

Woodland Park Zoo

Since the beginning of the School-to-Zoo program for students from low-income families, almost 9,000 students from qualifying Seattle schools have participated. Pro Parks also funded 43 major maintenance projects.

**Lion dance
performed
at ground-
breaking
for I.D.
Village
Square**

1999 Community Center Levy



In 1999, voters passed a \$72 million eight-year levy. Half of the money was earmarked for the improvement or building of nine community centers. (The other half went to Seattle Center.) Last year, we made substantial progress on nearly all nine projects. In 2002, we bought property in Northgate at 5th Ave. NE and NE 105th St. for the construction of a new branch library, community center and park.

Parks, with the Seattle Chinatown-International District Public Development Authority (SCIDPDA), broke ground on the Chinatown/International District Community Center. The community center will be housed in SCIDPDA's new multi-use facility, Village Square II, at the corner of S. Dearborn St. and 8th Ave. S. Planning was completed for the Southwest Community Center. Four projects were in the design development stages in 2002: Sand Point, Yesler, Jefferson and High Point. All these projects have either started construction in 2003 or will soon break ground.

South Lake Union Park

A cornerstone of Mayor Nickels' vision for the South Lake Union neighborhood is the redevelopment of South Lake Union Park. In 2002, achievements included completing the first phase of wharf renovations and increasing programming at the Naval Armory building. The Pro Parks project (\$5 million for planning and construction) began in 2002 with the selection of nationally known design firm Hargreaves Associates, who will work with Seattle's Mithun Architects as the project designers.

Sand Point Magnuson Park

Sand Point Magnuson Park made progress toward fulfilling the vision for park redevelopment approved by the City Council in 1999. We increased the number and diversity of events on the park campus, expanded programs offered to the public, and continued to improve park facilities.

Among the highlights in 2002:



Site and Campus Improvements

- Breaking ground and substantial progress on Community Garden.
- Completion of upland portion of the dog off-leash area, including new fencing and trails.
- Removal of 2,000 feet of chain link fencing and invasive plants.
- Improvements to Building 30, other buildings.

**Enhancement of
dogs off-leash
area at Sand
Point Magnuson
Park**

Events and Programs

Sand Point Magnuson Park has become a premier location for prominent special events such as Best of the Northwest, Northwest Bookfest, Friends of the Library book sales, fun runs, summer concerts, summer day camps and much more. A full range of recreational programs are run in various buildings, hangars and the North Shore Recreational Area.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS

During 2002, we continued to partner with the Department of Neighborhoods and Seattle's dynamic communities. We completed 14 new large projects and 46 small projects funded by the Neighborhood Matching Fund. We also completed 18 projects with funding from the \$500,000 Neighborhood Response Fund.

**Neighbors
celebrate
completion
of play area
at Ward
Springs Park**





ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

We continued our commitment to caring for the natural environment, restoring urban forestland, reducing the use of pesticides, and providing quality environmental education for children and people of all ages.

Birdhouse making workshop at South Park Community Center

Environmental Education

In spring 2002, Parks established a new Environmental Stewardship Unit to expand environmental programming for citizens, and model environmentally responsible behavior. Last summer, staff developed a variety of environmental programs for day camp youth in our 24 neighborhood community centers. More than 6,000 inner-city youth participated in environmental stewardship programs. Examples include youth improving urban wildlife habitat, creating litter pickup campaigns, and learning how behavior can affect our environment. Our many partners included Seattle Audubon, Seattle Public Library, Seattle Public Utilities, EarthCorps, 4-H and Lowe's Home Stores.

Clean Seattle

Othello Park and the surrounding neighborhood were the beneficiaries of Mayor Nickels' first major "Clean Seattle" project. Clean Seattle is Mayor Nickels' initiative to restore Seattle's reputation as one of the cleanest cities in the nation. Throughout the year, parks in other city neighborhoods took part in this cleanup campaign.

Park Inspection Program

As a measure of how well we take care of parks, we conducted 327 site inspections in 2002. The goal is to more quickly identify and take care of maintenance "trouble spots."

MAJOR MAINTENANCE

Taking care of the hundreds of existing parks and buildings in the system is an important part of our mission. In 2002 we spent a total of \$13.9 million on major maintenance projects, completing 54 projects. Some highlights:

Volunteer Park Conservatory: 2002 projects included the installation of a gift shop, funded by the Neighborhood Matching Fund and donations from the Friends of the Conservatory, and major maintenance repairs that included new boiler, glass and framing.

Pioneer Square Pergola: In August 2002, 19 months after it was knocked down by a wayward truck, the Pergola was re-opened after painstaking restoration work by

Seidelhuber Iron Works, including the installation of an inner skeleton of 40,000 pounds of structural steel.

High Point Playfield Lighting: High Point Playfield now has improved and more focused lighting that is responsive to community concerns, saves energy and is great for play.

Garfield Teen Life Center: Improvements were made to the lobby, computer room, social room, kitchen, gymnasium, hallway, weight room and entry.

SEATTLE AQUARIUM



**Restored
Pergola in
Pioneer
Square**

By any measure, 2002 was one of the most eventful and successful years in the history of the Aquarium. Total attendance for 2002 exceeded 630,000 visitors, the highest total since 1981, shortly after the Aquarium first opened.

On May 30, the new Life on the Edge exhibit opened, funded by a combination of City funds and private funds raised by the Seattle Aquarium Society (SEAS). The exhibit features the tidal areas of the region with ample opportunities to touch and learn about the fascinating marine creatures.

The year also was notable for another success in our sea otter breeding program with the birth in September of a pup named Aniak. Also in September the Seattle Aquarium was re-accredited by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) for five years. The AZA panel recognized the progress made in exhibitry, education programs, animal husbandry, and support for these from SEAS.



**Aniak, the
Aquarium's
sea otter pup**

Other highlights of 2002 included: creation of the Seattle Aquarium Research Committee for Conservation and Husbandry (SEARCCH) to better coordinate and support the Aquarium's research programs, including sea otter genetics and six gill sharks; expansion of the Summer Naturalist program; and the initiation of the Sound Science program through a four-year \$465,000 grant from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, an innovative hands-on science education program involving Seattle Public Schools and the University of Washington.

RECREATION PROGRAMS

Despite harder economic times in 2002, our recreation programs suffered no recession of activity or public participation. In 2002, our community centers recorded 2.2 million visits. Attendance at summer beaches topped 138,000. Staff scheduled 3,205 picnics and 242 weddings.

As always, parks and park facilities were places of public celebration and play throughout the year. Thousands of people attended our spring egg hunts, Seafair events, Halloween parties at community centers, the Green Lake Pathway of Lights, and the annual Christmas Ship visits to many of our shoreline parks. We are also here for kids when they are not in school with a full complement of before and after school programs and activities during spring breaks, summer day camps, the summer playground program, and special programs on teacher in-service days.



**Participants
in 2002
Wheelchair
Jamboree**

Specialized Programs

Highlights included a Wheelchair Jamboree at Southwest Community Center for wheelchair athletes in the spring, and summer camps for disabled children and adults. Every summer for the past 30 years, our Special Populations staff has run a series of summer day and sleep-over camps for up to 60 young people with a wide variety of mental and physical disabilities. Because they are the only camps of their kind in the area, participants and their families greatly appreciate the positive, active camp experience.

Athletics/Aquatics

In 2002, we completed a two-year process to update the **Joint Athletics Facilities Development Program**. Developed with the help of hundreds of field users and neighbors, the plan will guide our decisions as we improve and build sportsfields to meet the growing demand for scheduled ballfield time in a wide variety of sports.

Toward that end, we worked with citizens to install **field lights** at Genesee Playfield, Lower Woodland Park, and two School District sites: Sealth and Rainier Beach. This will allow increased hours of play for both youth and adults.



The annual Emerald City Open Water Swim

The **Green Lake Small Craft Center** resumed normal operation after completion of the boathouse renovation necessitated by damage suffered in the 2001 earthquake. Two crews from the Green Lake rowing program won their races at the National Youth Championships in Cincinnati. **The Mount Baker Rowing and Sailing Center** continued to work on the design and funding for a boathouse expansion to accommodate more boats and program space.

Children and Youth

Parks continued in its role as the largest provider of out-of-school programs and activities for youth in the city.

Alignment. In 2002, we aligned curricula at all of our after-school programs with Seattle Public Schools learning standards.

Community Learning Centers (CLCs). We also opened two new CLCs at Mercer and McClure middle schools to join the one we already ran at Denny Middle School. We work in partnership with the YMCA, which runs four CLCs. CLCs offer enriching out-of-school activities for students, and classes and activities for parents, families and community members.

After School Activities Program (ASAP). Funded by the Family and Education Levy, ASAP provides varied programs and activities ranging from tutoring to arts and crafts, sports, and leadership classes at all 18 Seattle middle schools. Fifty-two percent of all middle school students participated in ASAP in 2002.

Teen Programs. In 2002, all community centers established teen councils, which work with Teen Development Leaders to develop programs for teens and resolve teen issues. Teens were involved in developing scores of programs for Youth Appreciation Week during Seattle Schools' spring break, and events and programs that commemorated Martin Luther King Day in January.

Associated Recreation Council (ARC)

The 28-year partnership between Associated Recreation Council, the advisory councils and Seattle Parks and Recreation recorded another successful year in 2002. Despite cutbacks, the system continued to provide quality programs, classes and activities at reasonable rates. When hours of operation were reduced in community centers advisory councils stepped up to provide staff to support existing programs and ensure that communities would be served.

Among the other highlights of the year were investments in staff training such as cash handling training, and training in "Baseline Standards" that clarified roles and responsibilities necessary for a successful partnership.

Advisory Councils provided \$8 million of programming in 2002. Revenues for the combined activity of all the councils again grew at a respectable 3.8% for the year. General operating expense increased by 6.9%.

PARTNERSHIPS

We continued working well with major community and government partners such as Seattle Public Schools, EarthCorps, Seattle Public Utilities, and the Department of Neighborhoods. We have more than 300 contracts with community non-profit organizations.

No partner has been more important than the **Seattle Board of Park Commissioners**, under the leadership of Chair Bruce Bentley. Comprised of seven volunteer commissioners appointed by the Mayor, the Park Board in 2002 dispensed invaluable advice to the Department on major projects and policies, paying particular attention to citizen concerns. The Board made recommendations on several major projects, including the Joint Athletic Facilities Development Program and the sportsfield/wetlands project at Sand Point Magnuson Park.



**STEPs
participants
in summer
of 2002**

Here are a few examples of important community partnerships that enabled us to provide varied programming.

- **Steps Toward Environmental Partnership (STEPs):** We started an environmental stewardship and life-skills training program for 22 low-income youth in partnership with the Urban League, Seattle Downtown Rotary, Workforce Development Council, United Way of King County and SAFECO.
- **"Ren Ren Young Explorers" Program:** Jefferson Community Center collaborated with the Chinese Information and Service Center to provide a twice-per-week program for 50 immigrant Chinese teenagers to expose them to American sports and Native American cultural arts.
- **Mexican Day Summer Camp:** South Park Community Center offered a Mexican Day Camp program in partnership with the Mexican government and Seattle Public Schools. Two teachers from Mexico City taught 30 Mexican children.
- **Mural Project with Homeless Teens:** Laurelhurst Community Center Teen Program partnered with "Pathways," a residential program for homeless teens at Sand Point Magnuson Park, to create an art mural project.

Volunteerism was never more important in 2002. We benefited from 164,000 volunteer hours in our parks, community centers and to the Seattle Aquarium.

Seattle Parks Foundation

The Seattle Parks Foundation enjoyed a tremendously successful second year of operations. The Foundation raised almost \$2 million to benefit neighborhood parks throughout Seattle. These parks included the purchase and development of Homer Harris Park in the Central Area, the restoration of the first manmade climbing rock in the nation, Schurman Rock at Camp Long, and a new children's play area in Southeast Seattle. The Foundation is also working on the design of South Lake Union Park to prepare for a major fundraising campaign.

BUDGET AND FINANCE

Seattle Parks and Recreation's annual budget is approximately \$105 million.

Expenditures

In 2002, the Department budgeted approximately 40 percent of its expenditures towards caring for existing parks, open space, playfields, golf courses, community centers, and other important assets. The next largest commitment was for recreational programming, including operating and staffing community centers, environmental education and arts facilities, and pools; offering programs for children, teens, adults, and seniors; and scheduling space for everything from youth soccer leagues to weddings and picnics. The Zoo and Aquarium received funding of about \$20 million, or 20 percent of the total, but much of this was recovered from fees paid by visitors enjoying these attractions. Finally, about \$7 million was budgeted for the Department's capital projects division and for management and administration functions.

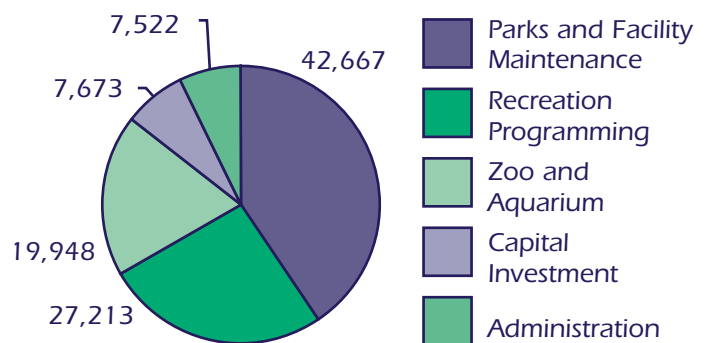
REVENUES

Funding for budgeted expenditures derives partly from support offered by general revenues collected and distributed by the City of Seattle, but also from an array of other tax, fee, and grant proceeds collected specifically for parks activities. Approximately \$38 million in proceeds from general revenues to the City of Seattle was budgeted to cover about 36 percent of total expenditures in 2002. An additional \$28 million was expected to derive from so-called "Charter Revenues" – a 10 percent share of proceeds from certain citywide taxes dedicated specifically to parks uses per the Seattle City Charter. Fees, charges, private contributions, and concession revenues cover a full quarter of the annual budget. Proceeds from special levies and grants from other public agencies round out the picture, contributing about \$13 million to overall revenue in 2002. This amount doubled from the previous year, as new property acquisitions, development projects, and programming initiatives came on line thanks to Seattle voters' passage of the Pro Parks Levy in November 2000.

2002 Budgeted Expenditures and Revenues by Line of Business

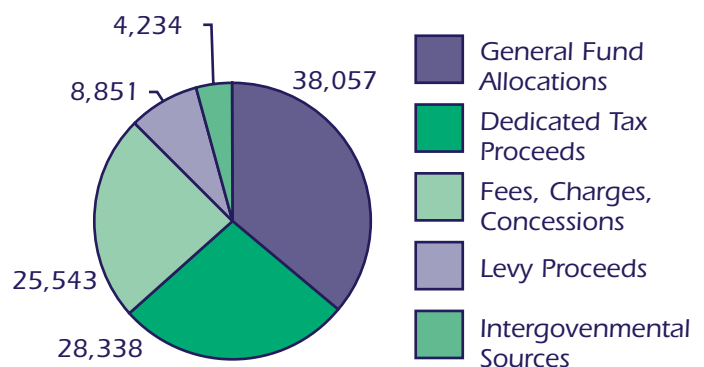
EXPENDITURES

Parks and Facility Maintenance	42,667	41%
Recreation Programming	27,213	26%
Zoo and Aquarium	19,948	19%
Capital Investment	7,673	7%
Administration	7,522	7%
total	105,023	



REVENUES

General Fund Allocations	38,057	36%
Dedicated Tax Proceeds	28,338	27%
Fees, Charges, Concessions	25,543	24%
Levy Proceeds	8,851	8%
Intergovernmental Sources	4,234	4%
total	105,023	



Credits

City of Seattle

Mayor Greg Nickels

Seattle Parks and Recreation

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Patricia McInturff, Deputy Superintendent

Sarah Welch, Director, Finance, Budget and Administrative Services

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General information

Please visit our web site for much more information about Seattle Parks and Recreation: **www.cityofseattle.net/parks** or call **(206) 684-4075**.

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Seattle Parks and Recreation will work with all citizens to be good stewards of our environment, and to provide safe and welcoming opportunities to play, learn, contemplate and build community.

